



# House of Representatives

General Assembly

**File No. 452**

February Session, 2004

Substitute House Bill No. 5633

*House of Representatives, April 5, 2004*

The Committee on Public Health reported through REP. FELTMAN of the 6th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

## **AN ACT CONCERNING VETERINARY TECHNICIANS AND VETERINARY ASSISTANTS.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2004*) (a) For purposes of this  
2 section:

3 (1) "Veterinary assistant" means a person who serves as an assistant  
4 to a veterinarian or veterinary technician by providing (A) office  
5 services, including, but not limited to, computer operations, client  
6 contact, completion and organization of medical records and  
7 community outreach, (B) basic care for animals, including, but not  
8 limited to, cleaning cages and examination areas, feeding, changing  
9 water dishes, monitoring animals recovering from surgery, bathing,  
10 grooming, monitoring exercise activities of animals, laboratory and  
11 radiology processing and surgical preparation and clean-up  
12 procedures, and (C) under the direct supervision of a veterinarian or  
13 veterinary technician, preparation of medications and vaccines,

14 packaging of dispensed drugs, performing injections and bandaging,  
15 and handling parasiticides; and

16 (2) "Veterinary technician" means a person who meets any one of  
17 the following standards:

18 (A) (i) Successful completion of a veterinary technology program  
19 accredited by the American Veterinary Medical Association, an  
20 associate's or higher degree program in animal or biological sciences,  
21 or not less than fifty per cent of the credits required for a degree of  
22 doctor of veterinary medicine, surgery or dentistry, and (ii) passage of  
23 the Veterinary Technician National Examination;

24 (B) (i) Certification as a veterinary technician in another state that  
25 has requirements which are substantially similar to, or higher than,  
26 those of this state, and (ii) passage of the Veterinary Technician  
27 National Examination;

28 (C) Employment as a veterinary assistant and passage of the  
29 Veterinary Technician National Examination; or

30 (D) On and after January 1, 2010, successful completion of a  
31 veterinary technology program accredited by the American Veterinary  
32 Medical Association and passage of the Veterinary Technician  
33 National Examination.

34 (b) (1) Except as provided in this subdivision and in subdivision (2)  
35 of this subsection, no licensed veterinarian shall delegate any duties  
36 requiring specialized training to a veterinary assistant. A veterinarian  
37 may delegate duties relating to phlebotomy or radiology to a  
38 veterinary assistant if the veterinary assistant has earned a certificate  
39 or degree in phlebotomy or radiology after training provided through  
40 a regionally accredited institution of higher education or a private  
41 occupational school authorized by the Commissioner of Higher  
42 Education pursuant to sections 10a-22a to 10a-22k, inclusive, of the  
43 general statutes. Each veterinary assistant shall maintain certificates or  
44 degrees attesting to such training for a minimum period of ten years

45 from the date of obtaining such certificate or degree. Such certificates  
46 or degrees shall be made available for inspection by the Department of  
47 Public Health not later than forty-eight hours after notification that the  
48 department is investigating the work of a veterinary assistant.

49 (2) (A) For the period from October 1, 2004 to October 1, 2007, a  
50 licensed veterinarian may delegate any duties requiring specialized  
51 training to a veterinary assistant who has been employed by such  
52 veterinarian for a period of not less than three consecutive years and  
53 who has (i) passed a state examination regarding services to small  
54 animals provided by a veterinary technician, (ii) passed a state  
55 examination regarding services to large animals provided by a  
56 veterinary technician, or (iii) passed the Veterinary Technician  
57 National Examination.

58 (B) The state examinations to be provided pursuant to subparagraph  
59 (A) of this subdivision shall be developed by the Connecticut  
60 Veterinary Medical Association in consultation with the Connecticut  
61 Association of Animal Health Technicians, and approved by the  
62 Commissioner of Public Health. The commissioner shall provide notice  
63 to the public of the development of such examinations, and shall  
64 accept public comments on them.

65 (C) The commissioner shall determine (i) the times and locations at  
66 which each state examination shall be administered, and (ii) a fee to be  
67 paid by each person taking an examination pursuant to subparagraph  
68 (A) of this subdivision. Such fees shall be in an amount sufficient to  
69 cover any costs to the Department of Public Health in implementing  
70 the provisions of this subdivision.

71 (c) Each veterinary technician shall maintain certificates, degrees  
72 and proof of passage of the Veterinary Technician National  
73 Examination attesting to his or her status as a veterinary technician for  
74 a minimum period of ten years from the date of obtaining such  
75 certificate or degree or passage of such examination. Such certificates,  
76 degrees and proof of passage shall be made available for inspection by  
77 the Department of Public Health not later than forty-eight hours after

78 notification that the department is investigating the work of a  
79 veterinary technician.

80 (d) No veterinary technician shall engage in any diagnosis or  
81 prognosis, prescription of treatment, drugs, medications or appliances  
82 or perform surgery.

This act shall take effect as follows:	
Section 1	<i>October 1, 2004</i>

**PH**      *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following fiscal impact statement and bill analysis are prepared for the benefit of members of the General Assembly, solely for the purpose of information, summarization, and explanation, and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either House thereof for any purpose:

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### **OFA Fiscal Note**

#### **State Impact:**

<b>Agency Affected</b>	<b>Fund-Effect</b>	<b>FY 05 \$</b>	<b>FY 06 \$</b>
Public Health, Dept.	GF - Cost	100,000	None
Public Health, Dept.	GF - Revenue Gain	Indeterminate	Indeterminate

Note: GF=General Fund

**Municipal Impact:** None

#### **Explanation**

Passage of this bill will result in a one-time cost of approximately \$100,000 to the Department of Public Health (DPH). The agency will have to enter into a contract for consultant services needed for purposes of exam development and validation in order to meet the bill's requirement that two approved state examinations be available as of October 1, 2004. No funding has been included within sHB 5033 (the Revised FY 05 Appropriations Act, as favorably reported by the Appropriations Committee) for this purpose.

The agency will be able to perform other duties resulting from passage of the bill without requiring additional resources. It should be noted that it is assumed that the agency would delegate administration of the exams in future years to one or more private entities.

The bill further requires the DPH to institute fees to be paid by persons taking the examinations and requires the aggregate amount collected to be sufficient to cover any agency costs incurred in the development or administration of the test. The resulting amount of revenue received will depend upon the number of persons submitting to the tests and the fees established by the agency, which cannot be determined in advance.

**OLR Bill Analysis**

sHB 5633

**AN ACT CONCERNING VETERINARY TECHNICIANS AND VETERINARY ASSISTANTS****SUMMARY:**

This bill defines “veterinary assistant” and “veterinary technician” and establishes standards that an individual must meet in order to be considered a veterinary technician (see COMMENT).

For a three-year period, the bill allows a veterinarian to delegate any duties requiring specialized training to a veterinary assistant, if the assistant has worked for the veterinarian for a defined period of time and has passed one of three specified examinations. Otherwise, delegation of duties requiring specialized training is limited.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2004

**VETERINARY ASSISTANTS**

The bill defines a “veterinary assistant” as someone who serves as an assistant to a veterinarian or veterinary technician by (1) providing office services such as computer operations, client contact, medical records completion and organization, and community outreach; (2) providing basic animal care such as cleaning cages and exam areas, feeding, changing water dishes, monitoring animals in surgery recovery, bathing, grooming, exercise monitoring, laboratory and radiology processing, and surgical preparation and clean-up procedures; and (3) under the direct supervision of a veterinarian or veterinary technician, preparing medications and vaccines, packaging dispensed drugs, performing injections and bandaging, and handling parasiticides.

**VETERINARY TECHNICIANS**

Under the bill, a “veterinary technician” must meet any one of the following:

1. (a) successful completion of a veterinary technology program accredited by the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), an associate's or higher degree program in animal or biological sciences, or not less than 50% of the credits required for a doctor of veterinary medicine, surgery, or dentistry and (b) passage of the veterinary technician national examination;
2. (a) certification as a veterinary technician in another state with requirements substantially similar to or higher than Connecticut's and (b) passage of the national examination;
3. employment as a veterinary assistant and passage of the national examination; or
4. beginning January 1, 2010, successful completion of a veterinary technology program accredited by the AVMA and passage of the national examination.

The bill requires a veterinary technician to maintain certificates, degrees, and proof of passage of the national examination attesting to his status as a veterinary technician for at least 10 years from the date of receiving the certificate or degree or passing the examination. These must be made available to the Department of Public Health (DPH) within 48 hours after notification that DPH is investigating the technician's work.

Veterinary technicians are prohibited, under the bill, from engaging in any diagnosis or prognosis; prescribing treatment, drugs, medications or appliances; or performing surgery.

## **DELEGATION OF DUTIES TO VETERINARY ASSISTANTS**

### ***Prohibition on Delegation of Certain Duties Requiring Specialized Training***

The bill prohibits a veterinarian from delegating any duties requiring specialized training to a veterinary assistant, except duties relating to phlebotomy or radiology if the assistant has a certificate or degree in phlebotomy or radiology after training provided by a regionally accredited higher education institution or private occupational school authorized by the higher education commissioner. The veterinary assistant must keep certificates or degrees attesting to such training for at least 10 years from the date obtained. They must be made available

for DPH inspection as described above.

### ***Three-Year Period Allowing Delegation of Duties Requiring Specialized Training***

From October 1, 2004 to October 1, 2007, the bill allows a veterinarian to delegate any duties requiring specialized training to a veterinary assistant who has been employed by the veterinarian for at least three consecutive years and who has (1) passed a state examination concerning veterinary technician services provided to small animals, (2) passed a state exam on veterinary technician services to large animals, or (3) passed the veterinary technician national examination.

These state examinations must be developed by the Connecticut Veterinary Medical Association in consultation with the Connecticut Association of Animal Health Technicians, and approved by DPH. The department must notify the public of the examinations' development and take public comment on them. DPH must determine the times and locations for the state examinations' administration and a fee for taking them. The fees must be sufficient to equal any costs to DPH in implementing the bill.

### **COMMENT**

#### ***Duties of Veterinary Technicians***

While the bill establishes standards an individual must meet in order to be a "veterinary technician" and specifies what a technician cannot do, the bill does not address what activities and practices a veterinary technician can engage in.

### **COMMITTEE ACTION**

Public Health Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 22      Nay 0